GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:134
ANSWERED ON:08.12.2015
Demarcation of ESZs
Arunmozhithevan Shri A.;Mahajan Smt. Poonam

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) the present status in respect of demarcation of Eco Sensitive Zones (ESZs) in the country, State-wise;
(b) whether the Government has received proposals from various States for demarcation of ESZs around protected areas and issue of notification for the same;
(c) if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon along with the details of notifications issued and pending so far, State-wise including Maharashtra and Gujarat;
(d) the constraints, if any, being faced by the Government in this regard; and
(e) the details of protected areas including National Parks and sanctuaries likely to be included under ESZs and the time by which final notification of ESZs is likely to be issued?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

(SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR)

(a) to (e): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

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Statement in reply to Parts (a) to (e) of the Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 134 for reply on 8.12.2015 regarding Demarcation of ESZs raised by Shrimati Poonam Mahajan and Shri A. Arunmozhithevan.

(a) to (e): As per the National Wild Life Action Plan (2002-2016) adopted by the Indian Board for Wild Life (IBWL) in its XXIst meeting held on 21st January 2002 under the chairmanship of Hon'ble Prime Minister, it was emphasized that "All identified areas around Protected Areas and wildlife corridors to be declared as ecologically fragile under the EnvironÂ¬ment (Protection) Act, 1986."

The Ministry has received 238 proposals complete in all respects for declaration of Eco-sensitive Zones around Wildlife Sanctuaries and National Parks from various State Governments as on 4.12.2015. So far, the Ministry has approved/notified, 229 proposals for declaration of Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZ) around Wildlife Sanctuaries and National Parks, of these 107 have been notified in the Gazette of India, of which, 79 are draft notifications and 28 are final notifications. The state-wise status in respect of demarcation and notification of Eco-sensitive Zones in the Gazette of India and proposals under process including those of Maharashtra and Gujarat is given at Annexure. The incomplete proposals and proposals deficient in information have been sent back to the respective State Governments for obtaining additional information.

The process of notification of Eco-sensitive Zones has been expedited in the Ministry. In order to obtain proposals from the State Governments for declaration of Eco-sensitive Zones, special state-wise meetings are being convened in the Ministry. The proposals received from the State Governments are sent to Wildlife Institute of India for assessing extent of ESZ, Biodiversity and Wildlife Corridor value, list of prohibited/regulated activities in the ESZ. Geospatial technologies are used to ascertain the extent of ESZ. The proposals sent by the State Governments and the recommendations of WII are examined in the Ministry and also by an Expert Committee before a final notification is issued. This ensures a justifiable ESZ. The process of notification of Eco-sensitive Zones in the Gazette of India also involves legal vetting by Ministry of law and Justice, Government of India.

The notification of Eco-sensitive Zones around Wildlife Sanctuaries and National Parks under the provisions of the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and Environment (Protection) Rules, 1986, as amended from time to time, involves seeking objections and suggestions from the stakeholders within 60 days of the publication of the draft notification. As per Environment (Protection) Rules, 1986, as amended from time to time, the draft notification needs to be finalized within 545 days from the date of publication of the draft notification. The Ministry has taken up the publication of Eco-sensitive zones notifications on top priority in a time bound manner.

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